



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Head Start

Head Start and/or Early Head Start Grantee -- City of Detroit, Michigan

HHS-2019-ACF-OHS-CH-R05-1542

Application Due Date: 01/16/2019

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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Funding Opportunity Title:	Head Start and/or Early Head Start Grantee -- City of Detroit, Michigan
Announcement Type:	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number:	HHS-2019-ACF-OHS-CH-R05-1542
Primary CFDA Number:	93.600
Due Date for Applications:	01/16/2019

Executive Summary

Notice:

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants & Funding Page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The federally-funded Head Start program provides high-quality, comprehensive early education programming to low-income children and families so that children start school ready to succeed. The Office of Head Start (OHS) is offering applicants the opportunity to apply for funding to serve pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and children from birth to compulsory school age in one application. This funding opportunity announcement (FOA) solicits applications from public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations or for-profit organizations that seek to provide a high-quality, comprehensive program incorporating both Head Start and Early Head Start funding, or to provide services for Head Start only or Early Head Start only, in a manner that ensures continuous services and seamless transitions for children and families residing in the City of Detroit, Michigan.

The goal of this FOA is to ensure an equitable distribution of resources to meet the demonstrated community needs of children from birth to compulsory school age, ensuring continuity of services and taking into account the availability of high-quality and comprehensive early childhood education opportunities (which may include public pre-Kindergarten programs for 4-year-olds). This FOA provides applicants the opportunity to propose to reallocate funding between Head Start and Early Head Start based on both the needs in the community and the applicant's capacity and experience serving pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschool-age children. Applicants may explore combining Head Start and Early Head Start funds with resources from other early childhood programs or funding streams, including state, local, and private sector funding for child care, pre-Kindergarten, and special education services. Please note that applicants responding to this FOA will be expected to begin providing Head Start and/or Early Head Start services quickly after award, with a minimal start-up period, to support limited to no disruption in services to the currently enrolled children and

families in this service area.

Funds in the amount of \$54,153,483 annually will be available to provide Head Start and/or Early Head Start services to eligible children and their families in the City of Detroit, Michigan. This dollar amount includes base funding of \$53,342,370 (for use in program operations, staffing, materials, equipment, facilities, etc.) and training and technical assistance (T/TA) funding of \$811,113. The appropriate use of T/TA funds for the purposes of improving program quality and helping prepare children to succeed in school are described in Section 648 and Section 645A(g) of the Head Start Act.

Any applicant responding to this FOA will submit one application, whether the applicant is proposing to provide: 1) Head Start services only, 2) Early Head Start services only, or 3) both Head Start and Early Head Start services. Applicants proposing to serve pregnant women are expected to serve the newborn through the Early Head Start program. Applicants should thoughtfully consider their reason for deciding to apply to conduct a program to serve the proposed population, including the particular age group of children and, if applicable, pregnant women. This decision should be based on the needs of the community.

I. Program Description

Statutory Authority

The Head Start program is authorized by the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9831 et seq.

Description

Program Background and Purpose

The Head Start program is administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an operating division (OPDIV) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). ACF intends to fund applications that demonstrate an organization's commitment and capacity to operate a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program that raises the quality of early care and education in the community and helps children start school ready to succeed. School readiness requires that children are cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally prepared to continue to make progress as they enter Kindergarten. ACF is seeking applicants that are able to use the best evidence-based early education practices in their programs to support high caliber classroom instruction, home visiting services, and effective family engagement and health promotion.

The Head Start and Early Head Start programs provide grants to public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to predominately economically disadvantaged children and families. Head Start's primary purpose is to prepare children to be ready for school. In fiscal year (FY) 1995, the Early Head Start program was established to serve pregnant women and children from birth to 3 years of age in recognition of the mounting evidence that the earliest years matter a great deal to children's growth and development. Since its beginning in 1965, Head Start has served more than 35 million children and their families. In FY 2016, Head Start served 915,603 children and families; of these, nearly 160,000 participants were served in Early Head Start programs. Currently there are approximately 1,700 Head Start grantees, including approximately 1,100 grantees providing

Early Head Start.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs must provide directly or through referral, early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services that will enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of participating children in the key domains of physical development and health; social and emotional development; approaches to learning, language and literacy; and cognition and general knowledge. Programs support parent engagement in their roles as their children's teachers and advocates, and help parents move toward self-sufficiency. Head Start promotes school readiness by addressing the key domains of language, literacy, mathematics, science, and social and emotional development.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs emphasize family engagement because of the critical role that parents play in supporting their children's healthy development and school success. Effective programs engage parents in their children's development and learning. Programs also emphasize the significant involvement of parents in the administration of local Head Start and Early Head Start programs. These leadership opportunities are designed to strengthen skills that parents can apply to improving their family's economic well-being and to becoming more effective advocates for their children.

Program Approach

Head Start and Early Head Start are designed to increase the number of low-income children receiving high-quality, comprehensive early education services that help facilitate healthy development, including physical and social/emotional development, and prepare them for school success. To meet this goal, it is critical that funds awarded through this FOA do not supplant existing services. Given the need for continuity of care to support the rapid development in the earliest years, the OHS expects that grantees will serve pregnant women, infants, and toddlers for at least 1,380 annual hours, as required in 45 CFR § 1302.21(c), unless approved for a locally-designed option. OHS expects that grantees will implement a full-year model, as described in 45 CFR Part 1302 Subpart B, that will require per-child costs that, in most circumstances, will be higher than the costs needed to provide part-year services. Applicants are encouraged to use this opportunity to design a model of services and program options that best meet the needs of children and families over time, including helping to meet the child care needs of parents.

Applicants are encouraged to bring new and innovative ideas that are evidence-based or evidence-informed to maximize the extent to which Early Head Start and Head Start, in collaboration with other partners and early childhood education providers, can prepare children and their families for school.

Head Start Program Performance Standards

In addition to the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9801 et seq., Head Start is governed by the Head Start Program Performance Standards that define the scope of services necessary to support children's development and school readiness. These program performance standards are found in 45 CFR Parts 1301-1305 <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii>. The Head Start Program Performance Standards are the foundation on which programs design and deliver comprehensive, high-quality individualized services to support the school readiness of children from low-income families. The program performance standards set forth the requirements local

grantees must meet to support the cognitive, social, emotional, and healthy development of children from birth to age 5. They encompass requirements to provide education, health, mental health, nutrition, and family and community engagement services, as well as rules for local program governance and aspects of federal administration of the program.

Program Model

ACF is interested in new and innovative models that provide continuous and seamless services for pregnant women, children and their families. These models should be designed to be responsive to community needs, be evidence-based or evidence-informed, and maximize the extent to which the Early Head Start and Head Start resources, in collaboration with other partners and early childhood education providers, can prepare children and their families for school.

Non-Federal Match

Grantees must, unless a waiver is granted, contribute 20 percent of the total cost of the program from non-federal funds. A waiver may be granted for any of the grounds listed in Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act. (45 CFR § 1303.4).

Administrative Cost Waiver

No more than 15 percent of total costs may be used for program administration. An HHS official may grant a waiver of the 15 percent limitation on allowable development and administration costs for a Head Start or Early Head Start program approving a higher percentage for a specific period of time not to exceed 12 months (45 CFR § 1303.5).

Monitoring

OHS is responsible for monitoring the quality of Head Start and/or Early Head Start program services and the grantee's compliance with federal and other applicable requirements. The federal government uses several mechanisms to conduct its oversight. These reviews can either be announced or unannounced. During onsite monitoring visits, all aspects of a grantee's program are reviewed, including compliance with health and safety requirements, compliance with rules related to children's eligibility for the program, and compliance with financial management requirements. New grantees are reviewed at the end of their first year of operation based on the authority in Section 641A(c)(1)(B) of the Head Start Act.

Federal Evaluation

As a condition of acceptance of an award under this FOA, all grantees are required to participate fully in ACF-sponsored evaluations and adhere to all evaluation protocols established by ACF to be carried out by its designee contractors.

Eligible Participants

Head Start serves children when they are at least 3 years old by the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community where the Head Start program is located. Early Head Start programs enroll pregnant women and infants and toddlers from birth to age 3. Families must either have incomes below the poverty line or be eligible for public assistance in order to be income eligible for Head Start or Early Head Start programs. In addition, homeless children and children in foster care are categorically eligible for services. Children are selected for enrollment based on age and income eligibility and relative level of need with regard to

other criteria that are identified within each community (45 CFR § 1302.12(b)(c)).

Head Start regulations permit up to 10 percent of enrolled participants to be from families that do not meet these low-income criteria. A provision in the Head Start Act, as discussed in Section 645(a)(1)(B), which is applicable to both Head Start and Early Head Start, allows grantees that can ensure that all eligible children, including homeless children, are served, to enroll up to an additional 35 percent of its participants from families with incomes greater than or equal to 100 percent, but less than 130 percent, of the poverty line. It is not expected, however, given the relatively low Early Head Start participation rates, that the provisions of Section 645(a)(1)(B) regarding serving up to 35 percent of a program's enrollment from families with incomes up to 130 percent of the poverty line would apply for this announcement.

Additionally, programs must ensure that at least 10 percent of the total number of children enrolled by the Head Start or Early Head Start agency and delegates are children with disabilities unless a waiver is granted.

Applicants may elect to propose program models that promote socioeconomic diversity within classrooms. Federal Head Start funds must be used to serve eligible children as described in this section. Additional children who are not income-eligible for Head Start or Early Head Start can be served so long as their participation is supported through other funding sources, including child care subsidies, public school pre-K allocations, parent-paid tuition, or other sources. Such program designs may be beneficial in promoting socioeconomic diversity within classrooms. All costs must be allocated to appropriate funding sources in compliance with federal requirements.

Mortgages and Long-Term Lease Agreements

If so directed by OHS, the newly funded grantee must accept assignment of any existing mortgages, long-term lease agreements, or security agreements (in the case of a modular unit) on properties subject to a federal interest occupied by the current grantee.

For more information on application requirements specific to this FOA, please reference *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

II. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Estimated Total Funding:	\$54,153,483
Expected Number of Awards:	11
Award Ceiling:	\$54,153,483 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$500,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$0 Per Budget Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	07/02/2019
Length of Project Periods:	
Length of Project Period:	60-month project period with five 12-month budget periods

Additional Information on Awards

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds.

Expected Number of Awards

Please note that the expected number of awards represents an estimated **range** of awards that OHS might make as the result of this funding opportunity announcement. If the expected number of awards is 1, applicants are expected to submit proposals for the entire service area. If the expected number of awards is 2 or greater, applicants may submit 1 application to apply to serve either the entire service area, or a portion of the service area.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the “Award Ceiling Disqualification.” that is explained in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the “Award Ceiling Disqualification” will apply.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-Federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A grantee’s failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of Federal funds.**

Applicants must submit an annual (12-month) budget. The funding amount listed on Line 18a (Federal) of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, must reflect a full 12 months of funding. The federal funding amounts reflected on the SF-424 and in the applicant’s budget submission must match.

The Designation Renewal System, as established in 45 CFR Part 1304 - Federal Administrative Procedures, Subpart B, requires all Head Start and Early Head Start grants be awarded as 5-year grants (60 months with five 12-month budget periods).

Funding provided for the operation of the program is referred to as “base operating funds” or “base funding”; funding provided for training and technical assistance is referred to as “T/TA.”

Start-up/Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs, including start-up costs, may be requested by an applicant in addition to the base operating and T/TA grant funds. If requested, applicants must provide a separate budget for start-up/pre-award costs, in addition to a 12-month budget for the base funding awarded, within the page limitations stated for the *Budget and Budget Justification* in *Section IV.2*.

Content and Form of Application Submission. If awarded, start-up/pre-award costs would apply to costs incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date. Examples of start-up activities are facility renovations, purchase of classroom supplies, building purchase, licensing, background checks, etc.

Approval of start-up/pre-award costs is **not** guaranteed; they are negotiated at the time of award and are based on reasonableness, necessity, and the availability of funds. The incurrence of start-up/pre-award costs in anticipation of an award is done at the applicant's own risk and imposes no obligation on ACF either to make an award or to increase the amount of the approved budget if an award is made for less than the amount anticipated and is inadequate to cover the start-up/pre-award costs incurred. It is possible that ACF may honor start-up/pre-award costs by reducing the base amount of the award to include these costs.

Estimates for start-up/pre-award costs must be separately identified on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, and in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application. The start-up/pre-award funding amount must **not** be included in the funding amount listed on Line 18a (Federal) of the SF-424. The funding amount listed in Line 18a of the SF-424 must represent only the total annual federal funding the applicant is requesting for base and T/TA funding. Start-up/pre-award costs, if requested, should be included only on the Other Estimated Funding line (Line 18e) and clearly labeled as "Start-up/Pre-Award Costs" in a separate line item on the SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs. Additionally, if applicants are requesting start-up/pre-award costs, these costs must be easily identified as a separate budget in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" that is explained in this section of the announcement and in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply.

Start-up budgets will be evaluated against the criteria listed in *Section V.1. Criteria*.

Note: Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered an approved use of pre-award costs and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

Grant Awards

Due to the availability of current year appropriated funds, the successful applicant(s) under this FOA *may* receive grant awards with a 5-year project period (60 months) that include 6 budget periods. In cases where a full 12 months of funding is not available at the time of the grant award, the first and sixth budget periods within the 5-year project period will be pro-rated, so that when combined, they equal 12 months of funding. The second, third, fourth, and fifth budget periods would be a full 12 months.

Please see *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

It is important to note that the eligibility requirements are different for Head Start and Early Head Start.

Entities applying for Head Start only - OR - both Head Start and Early Head Start:

Eligible applicants are limited to local public or private non-profit agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or local for-profit agencies, pursuant to Section 641(a)(1) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9836(a)(1) in the service area, that can provide Head Start services to children and families residing in the City of Detroit, Michigan. Applicants must demonstrate they meet the statutory requirement for designation as a Head Start and/or Early Head Start agency as defined in the Head Start Act.

For designation as a Head Start agency, ACF will consider all "qualified applicants in such community" as required by Section 641(d) where the applicant demonstrates it has an organizational base within the community to be served. This could be established by virtue of the applicant being a provider of services in the community or having a clear relationship to the community as evidenced, for example, by board representation from the community or by evidence of the support of community leaders, including, but not limited to mayors; city council members; school principals; presidents of local chambers of commerce; county government officials; social service provider organizations; community organizations representing low-income, minority, or other relevant sectors of the community; and child care providers and organizations.

Entities applying for Early Head Start only:

Eligible applicants are any public or private non-profit agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or for-profit agencies pursuant to Section 645A(d) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9840A(d).

Eligibility is limited to public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations or for-profit organizations in the service area that can provide Early Head Start services to children and families residing in the City of Detroit, Michigan.

Entities operating Head Start programs are eligible to operate Early Head Start programs.

Entities applying for Head Start and/or Early Head Start:

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement.

See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

Grantees are required to meet a non-federal share of the project cost, in accordance with Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9835 (b).

Grantees must provide at least 20 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (federal) share and the non-federal share. The non-federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. For example, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting \$54,153,483.00 in ACF (federal) funds must provide a non-federal share of the approved total project cost of at least \$13,538,371.00 , which is 20 percent of total approved project cost of \$67,691,854.00 .

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Waivers

To receive a waiver or a reduction in the required non-federal share, the applicant must provide ACF with written documentation of need. This request must identify which of the five waiver criteria found at Section 640(b)(1-5) of the Head Start Act it believes to be relevant. It may be submitted with the grant proposal document or during the budget negotiation period. Approval of the waiver request cannot be assumed by the applicant without written notice from

ACF. Waiver requests will not impact the award of points in the evaluation of the application.

Please note: The following matching requirement waiver allowed by 48 U.S.C. § 1469a(d) is only available to territorial governmental agencies that are applicants or grantees under Early Head Start in the Insular Areas. Head Start grantees in the Insular Areas are not eligible for this waiver.

Matching Waiver Pursuant to 48 U.S.C. § 1469a(d)

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than \$200,000 (up to \$199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds \$200,000.

Non-federal resources will be evaluated under criteria found in *Section V.1.* of this announcement.

III.3. Other

Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification," as explained in *Section II. Federal Award Information*. (See directions for listing these costs in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission, Budget and Budget Justification*.) **However, the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs (SF-424 18e, Other) from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal).**

Application Submission Disqualifications

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** See "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6>.

Termination for Cause and Denial of Refunding

In accordance with 45 CFR § 1304.13, grantees terminated for cause by ACF within 5 years prior to the posting date of this FOA will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

A Head Start or Early Head Start agency that has had a denial of refunding, in the preceding five years is also excluded from competing (45 CFR § 1304.13).

Notification of Application Disqualification

Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

Office of Head Start
OHS Operations Center
1401 Mercantile Lane
Suite 401

Largo, MD 20774
Phone: (888) 242-0684
Email: OHSTech@reviewops.org

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Forms Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at www.Grants.gov. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Formatting the Application Submission

All applications must follow the formatting and upload requirements in this section in order for the full application to be reviewed. Failing to adhere to the three-file requirement, page limitations, and/or formatting restrictions will result in part of the application being excluded from review.

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS**Single Application Submission**

Applicants are limited to submitting only one application in response to this funding opportunity announcement. Only the last on-time, application submission will be accepted for review. Electronically submitted applications must be on time and pass the www.Grants.gov validation process to be accepted for review.

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

The AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

NOTE: This definition differs from the definition of an AOR at www.Grants.gov. At www.Grants.gov the E-Biz POC is the only person who can approve AORs, which allows your

organization to authorize specific staff members to submit grants on behalf of the organization.

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

English Language

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

Font Size and Margins

All narrative documents (e.g., Project Summary/Abstract, Project Description, Budget and Budget Justification, Federal Financial Review) **must be in 12-point Times New Roman (TNR) font with 1-inch margins.** All tables, charts, and inserts must also be in TNR 12-point font. Only footnotes may be in TNR 10-point font.

Line Spacing

Double Spacing: The Project Description and Federal Financial Review must be double-spaced. Any non-numerical tables, charts, or inserts must be double-spaced.

Single Spacing: The Project Summary/Abstract, Table of Contents, and Budget and Budget Justification may be single-spaced. *Numerical* budget tables included as part of the application narrative may be single-spaced.

Formatting for Appendices (Second File) and Federal Financial Review Attachments (Third File)

Documents submitted in the Appendices (Second File) and Federal Financial Review Attachments (Third File) must be readable. If the font size is not readable, **all unreadable pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.** For example, pages that contain blurred text or text that is too small to read comfortably will be removed. In addition, applicants are prohibited from submitting two or more pages per page in reduced size on a single page.

Enforcement of FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements

Applications that exceed the **150-page limitation** will have page(s) removed from the end of the Second File, which includes the Appendices, before the review. The removed page(s) will

not be made available to reviewers.

In instances where formatting and font requirements are not adhered to, ACF uses a formula to recalculate the number of pages the application would include if it conformed to the formatting and font requirements listed in this section. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1,500 characters, per page which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Recalculation of pages using this formula may cause applications to exceed the page limitation, which would cause pages to be removed from the end of the Second File, which includes the Appendices, and excluded from review.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

NOTE: Applicants failing to adhere to the FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

Page Limitations and File Content

The page limitation is 150 pages for the Project Summary/Abstract, Table of Contents, Project Description and Appendices. The Federal Financial Review attachments (financial statements, notes, and audit reports) are not subject to the 150-page limitation when they are included in the Third File as described in the following list. Page limitations are identical for electronic and paper formats application submissions.

Each applicant is required to upload only three electronic files, excluding Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms. Application components MUST be submitted in the prescribed order (see file list) regardless of whether the application is submitted in electronic or paper format. Applications must not exceed the 150-page limit for all of the components in the First and Second Files or pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.

First File

- Project Summary/Abstract (*single-spaced*) – *limited to 1 page*
- Table of Contents (*single-spaced*) – *suggested 1 page*
- Project Description (*double-spaced*) – *suggested 75 pages*
 - Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options
 - Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children
 - Past Performance
 - Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce

- Planning and Implementation
- Organizational Capacity and Governance
- Budget and Budget Justification

Second File

- Appendices (*must be readable*) – *suggested 73 pages*
 - Signed Board of Directors Attestation
 - Certificate of Good Standing
 - Proof of Legal Status of Applicant
 - Proof of Policy Council Approval
 - Organizational Capacity documentation (e.g., resumes, job descriptions, organizational charts)
 - Signed memoranda of understanding
 - Third-party agreements
 - Indirect cost rate agreement (IDR)
 - Letters of support
 - Oversight of Federal Awards
 - Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information
 - Other supporting documents

Third File

- Federal Financial Review Attachments (most recent annual independent audit, including financial statements, related notes to the financial statements and the schedule of findings and questioned costs) – *no page limitation*

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

See formatting and font style requirements under “*FOR ALL APPLICATIONS*” earlier in this section.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.

NOTE: Only applications that pass the www.Grants.gov validation check will be received by ACF. Applications that fail the www.Grants.gov validation check will not be transmitted to ACF. See *Application Validation* at www.Grants.gov under *Application Submission Options* later in this section.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Grants.gov’s Adobe Software Compatibility page at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>. Adherence to the Three-File Application Format is Required:

- **No more than three files will be accepted for the review.** Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms are not considered additional files. **If four or more files are submitted, all additional files will be removed from the application and excluded from competitive review, even if the total number of pages within all submitted files does not exceed the 150-page limit.**
- **ACF will remove all pages over the 150-page limit from the end of the Second File and exclude those pages from competitive review.** The third file, which may contain only the Federal Financial Review Attachments (financial statements and notes and audit reports), is not subject to a page limit.

Application Upload Requirements

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). To adhere to the three-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using PDF conversion software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability. However, ACF understands that all applicants may not have access to this software.

- ***First File*** must be uploaded to the "Project Narrative Attachment Form" in the electronic Grant Application Package at Grants.gov. It must contain the Project Summary/Abstract, Table of Contents, and Project Description, including the Budget and Budget Justification.
- ***Second File*** and ***Third File*** must be uploaded to the "Other Attachment Form" in the electronic Grant Application Package at Grants.gov. ***Second File*** must contain the Appendices. ***Third File*** must contain only the Federal Financial Review Attachments (financial statements and notes and audit reports).

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-Approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Naming Application Submission Files

Applicants should use the following names for their files: FirstFile, SecondFile, and ThirdFile. **Applicants must carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov.**

- **Limit file names to 50 characters or less (characters and spaces).**

- **Do not attach any documents with the same name. All attachments should have a unique name.**
- **Use only the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Attachments that do not follow this rule may cause the entire application to be rejected or cause issues during processing.**

For information on the use of special characters (UTF-8) that are allowed in the application's content, please also see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/grantors/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the three application submission files are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the three file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by Grants.gov or ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues

Applicants that experience issues with federal systems related to application submission, www.Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing

Federal Systems Issues” document for complete guidance at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf under "How to Apply for a Grant/Submit an Application."

PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

See formatting and font style requirements under “*FOR ALL APPLICATIONS*” earlier in this section.

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under Application Submission Options for more information.

Required application Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications are available in the electronic forms package posted on www.Grants.gov for this FOA.

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved assurances and/or certifications.

Signatures

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

Packaging the Paper Application Submission

NOTE: Applicants that have an approved exemption to submit their applications in paper format must include a copy of their approved waiver in the application package. The required copy of the approved waiver will not impact the page limitation.

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.** If two-sided pages are submitted, only the "front" page will be used.

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the paper application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper application submissions.

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at www.Grants.gov.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-424A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs / SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424C - Budget Information Construction Programs / SF-424D - Assurances Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for both, non-construction and construction activities, under the proposed project. Standard Forms must be used. Standard Forms must be submitted by the application due date. By signing and submitting the SF-424B and/or SF-424D, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.	Required for all applications when applying for non-construction and/or construction activities under the proposed project. Please see special instructions in the <i>Checklist</i> in <i>Section VIII. Other Information</i> in this announcement. Projects that include both, non-construction and construction activities must submit the SF-424A, B, C, and D.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be	See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.

	<p>maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov.</p>	
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.
Assurance: Board Attestation	Submission is strongly encouraged for any applicants who collaborate with an external grant-writer, consultant and/or contractor for assistance and/or support on their	A template of this assurance is provided in the <i>Appendix</i> of this announcement. The assurance must be signed by the Board chair, or person who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant.

	application submission. The assurance may be submitted with the application package.	
Certificate of Good Standing	Submission is required for all for-profit organizations .	Sole proprietorships are not eligible applicants. The submission of the Certificate of Good Standing, along with the current list of board members, and organizational documents that require the establishment and maintenance of a Board of Directors, provide proof of eligibility for for-profit organizations.
Proof of Policy Council Approval	Submission is required of applicants that are current Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees .	Proof of Policy Council Approval of the application is required of applicants that are current Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees by section 642(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Head Start Act and 45 CFR § 1301.3.

Mandatory Grant Disclosure

Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

And to:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201

Fax: (202) 205-0604 (Include “Mandatory Grant Disclosures” in subject line) or

Email: MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

SF-424 Key Contact Form

Applicants must provide contact information on the following in this form:

- Key Management Staff (e.g., Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer)
- Key Program Staff (e.g., Executive Director, Program Director)
- Board Chairperson

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*.

Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

Project Summary/Abstract

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must

include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

For Applicants Submitting an Application to Implement a Head Start and/or Early Head Start Program

Applicants seeking funding for both Head Start and Early Head Start programs should describe in their application how the model of joint operation of Head Start and Early Head Start will be conducted in the community, as well as how the entity will manage both sets of services.

1. Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options

Applicants must describe the precise geographic locations(s) and boundaries of the areas to be served (as described in *Section I. Program Description*). Provide data about why that geographic area is in high need of early childhood education and family support services. Data must include the number of eligible pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers by geographic location; the number of families in extreme poverty; jobless rates; incidence of community health problems; or other similar factors. Provide a description of information regarding the availability and access to early childhood education services for low-income infants, toddlers, or preschoolers in the proposed geographic area.

Clearly justify how the needs of the community are best served by their proposed approach, including a rationale for which ages of children the applicant proposes to serve in its program.

Justify the program option(s) proposed for each age group to be served as the most appropriate to meet the needs of the community, as outlined in 45 CFR § 1302.20, including how many pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers will be served; and the number of hours per day, days per week, and weeks per year proposed.

- Applicants proposing to serve in multiple communities must specify the number of program participants to be served in each community.
- Applicants proposing the home-based option must include the proposed number of home visits and socializations for each age group(s) to be served.
- Applicants proposing the use of double sessions as a program option for Head Start (45 CFR § 1302.21; § 1305.2, Double Session Variation definition), which is discouraged, must justify why it is the best option to meet the demonstrated need in the community.

Describe how the proposed program will ensure that not less than 10 percent of the total number of children enrolled will be children with disabilities. Describe how the proposed program will partner with other programs or services in the community to best meet the needs of low-income families to be served, with evidence of community engagement and community partnerships in the geographic location(s) to improve service delivery, increase access to services, and prevent duplication.

If proposing delegate agencies, describe how those delegate agencies were chosen, and how the grantee's oversight will ensure the delegate agencies implement high-quality programs that adhere to the requirements outlined in 45 CFR 1303 Subpart D. Applicants must also identify the communities in which the delegate agency will operate, and the number of children to be served including the proposed program option(s).

2. Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children

Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to implement and sustain the high-quality, comprehensive, individualized educational, health, mental health, nutritional, oral health, and other social services to pregnant women, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their families that prepare children to succeed in school. Describe how the program will implement program components and, where applicable, describe separately for infants and toddlers and for preschoolers.

Name the curriculum or set of curricula that will be used, describe why that curriculum/curricula was selected, and present the evidence basis that the curriculum/curricula effectively promotes progress toward school readiness (for preschoolers) or its developmental foundations (for infants and toddlers). Provide evidence supporting how the curriculum is tied to outcomes for children and that meet the requirements discussed in 45 CFR § 1302.30.

Applicants must describe a process for establishing and measuring school readiness goals (45 CFR § 1302.102) that reflect the ages of children proposed to be served, and demonstrate these goals are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

- **Applicants proposing an Early Head Start program:** must explain the extent to which goals were or will be established in alignment with state early learning guidelines,

as appropriate.

- **Applicants proposing a Head Start program:** must explain the extent to which goals align with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, state early learning guidelines, and describe the requirements and expectations of schools the children will attend after Head Start.

Describe how service effectiveness and quality will be measured, monitored, and improved upon over time. Applicants must specify the name and process for selection of their assessment tool. The assessment must be developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate. Describe the plan to use child assessment data for individualization and referral; and for aggregation and analysis. Describe how that analysis will be used in combination with other program data to determine grantees' progress toward meeting its goals.

Applicants also must include information about how they will meet the health, oral health, mental health, and nutrition needs for pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers. This includes a description of the system for health screening and services that will ensure participants are accurately referred for necessary follow-up evaluation and treatment within time frames specified by 45 CFR § 1302.33.

Provide a plan describing how the applicant will integrate parent and family engagement strategies into all systems and program services to promote children's learning and development, as discussed in 45 CFR § 1302.34 and 1302.50-52.

Describe how the proposed program will meet the unique needs of special populations, including children with disabilities, dual language learners, children and pregnant women experiencing homelessness, working families, and children in foster care. Applicants must explain their procedures to identify such participants, plans to provide trained personnel, and plans to provide services to assist children in making meaningful progress in attaining age-appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and development.

In addition, applicants must propose the coordination of services within a community that support transitions for children and families.

For applicants proposing an Early Head Start program: Applicants must describe how they will deliver services to enrolled pregnant women post-pregnancy, and how the newborn infant and family will transition into the appropriate program option. They must also describe how the program will support transitions within the Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. Lastly, applicants must describe how they will ensure that infants, toddlers, and their families participating in the program will have the opportunity to receive Head Start or other appropriate preschool services for which they are eligible through the age of mandatory school attendance.

Finally, applicants must describe its plan to coordinate with public and private entities that are willing to commit resources to assist the program in providing high-quality child health and developmental services. Such partnerships must include a plan to coordinate with other child care and preschool programs, state pre-Kindergarten programs, programs under Part C and Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and with the educational programs that children will enter upon leaving Early Head Start or Head Start.

3. Past Performance

Applicants must provide evidence of organizational experience (including the experience of key leaders in the organization such as the executive director, program director, and managers) that supports its ability to implement the proposed program. They must also discuss a history of providing effective financial management in operating programs of similar scope and complexity.

They must describe how their past experience in early education (or related fields) and in communities similar to the targeted community will enable them to operate a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. This may include evidence of the quality of the early education programs or related programs it has operated in the past such as licensing history, accreditation, ratings, or independent evaluations of programs, or outcome data for children.

Applicants must also describe the past performance of organizations with which it proposes to delegate all or part of their services.

Explain the ways (if any) in which past experience – or that of any proposed delegate agencies – differs from operating a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. Discuss how it will address these differences and succeed in providing high-quality, comprehensive services.

Current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantees must include a description of any violations, such as deficiencies, areas of non-compliance, and/or audit findings. Applicants may describe the actions they have taken to address any violations. Additionally, applicants that serve or have served as delegate agencies to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees must provide documentation of their past performance.

4. Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce

Applicants must describe the qualifications of its proposed staff, including their experience in providing child development services in accordance with 45 CFR § 1302.91. This includes a description of key program staff's major functions and responsibilities. Also describe the management staff's knowledge of the requirements of the proposed program, and how it will ensure that all program staff members understand how those standards are applicable to them. If proposing a Head Start and Early Head Start program, describe the plan to include staff with infant/toddler as well as preschool expertise in decision-making roles.

Applicants must describe how it will attract and retain qualified staff, including through salary and benefits, with the ability to implement a research-based curriculum; effective instructional strategies; and a high-quality, comprehensive program. Describe the strategies and mechanisms to support staff; and a plan to assess staff performance including under-performing staff.

Applicants must also describe how they will provide career development opportunities for professional, paraprofessional, and other staff (45 CFR § 1302.91).

Additionally, applications must describe a plan to evaluate job applicants, including existing grantee staff, to determine which applicants are most capable of implementing a high-quality, comprehensive program.

The narrative must also address: (1) how the applicant will facilitate strong staff-child relationships that support the development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers; (2) a plan to ensure that staff are prepared for and supported in implementing evidence-based instructional

practices that are individualized to support positive child outcomes; and (3) how all staff will successfully partner with families in supporting children's development.

If proposing center-based or family child care services, describe the plan for observing teacher practice, including teacher-child interactions. If proposing home-based services, describe the plan for observing home visitor practice, including interactions with the family and child, and supporting the parents in their role as the child's primary caregiver/teacher. For all program services, discuss using this information to inform professional development and practice improvements. Include the name of any instruments to be used.

5. Planning and Implementation

Successful applicants will be expected to begin providing services quickly after award, with a minimal start-up period, to support limited to no disruption in program services. Therefore an implementation plan and timeline, including transition period planning, must be included that at a minimum addresses the following:

- State and local licensing requirements for each proposed age group, the length of time required to obtain licensure for early childhood learning environments, and the impact on the proposed implementation plan.
- The availability of appropriate facilities for proposed program model(s), and the anticipated timelines for completing any construction, renovation, or adaptation of space to meet requirements.
- As applicable, plans for alternative service provision (e.g., temporary home-based services) during start-up, until facilities are fully operational.
- Where facilities are not available, a plan to acquire facilities in accordance with 45 CFR § 1303.42.
- The ability to recruit, hire and train qualified staff to support the proposed start of Head Start and/or Early Head Start programming.

6. Organizational Capacity and Governance

Applicants must demonstrate their ability to oversee operations that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The application must describe the capacity of senior executive managers (for example, Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer) and governing body to:

- exercise effective oversight of program operations and accountability for federal funds;
- set and monitor overall agency priorities and operational systems;
- develop and implement systems for communication, record-keeping, reporting, and ongoing monitoring, and;
- conduct community assessment, annual self-assessments, and outcome-based evaluations.

Applicants must document their plan to constitute and train a governing body that is in compliance with the program governance requirements established in Section 642(c) of the

Head Start Act. Applicants must also demonstrate their capacity to effectively implement a system of governance that includes the Policy Council and parents in decision making. If applicable, applicants should provide information about how its current governance structure would change (if at all) to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Please see 7. *Budget and Budget Justification*, under *The Project Budget and Budget Justification* in this section for additional program-specific requirements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial review is conducted to assess the grantee's financial capability based on information provided in the application package, including the most recent audit conducted under 45 CFR Part 75 – Subpart F. All applicants **must** include their most recent annual independent audit meeting the requirements of 45 CFR Part 75 – Subpart F, including financial statements, related notes to the financial statements, and the schedule of findings and questioned costs required by 45 CFR §75.507(b)(4)(iv) noting whether or not the applicant qualifies as a low risk auditee.

Geographic Location

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project.

Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

Legal Status means being established as a public agency under state law or a non-profit under state or federal law. ACF will accept proof of status as a for-profit organization under state or federal law.

For-Profit Organizations

Sole-proprietorships are not eligible applicants. For-profit organizations applying for funding must submit the following to provide proof of their eligibility and legal status:

- A Certificate of Good Standing,
- A current list of board members, and
- Organizational documents that require the establishment and maintenance of a Board of Directors.

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate

state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.

- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the electronic application submission.

Additional Eligibility Documentation

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement:

Proof of Policy Council Approval

Current Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees must submit Proof of Policy Council Approval of the application as required by section 642(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Head Start Act (45 CFR § 1301.3).

Organizational Capacity

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- List of Board of Directors;
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

Third-Party Agreements

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

Letters of Support

Provide statements from community, public, and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions must be included in the application package.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form SF-424A and, if required, the SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the application forms package on Grants.gov. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. **Applicants proposing construction costs must submit the SF-424C and SF-424D forms listed under the "Optional" section of the FOA's electronic application package at Grants.gov in addition to the SF-424A and SF-424B.**

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Project budget Standard Forms (SF-424A and/or SF-424C) will not count toward page limitations; however, the budget and budget justification should be no more than 15 single-

spaced pages using Times New Roman font at no smaller than 12 pt.

Special Note: Section 653 of the Head Start Act provides that “[n]otwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to pay any part of the compensation of an individual employed by a Head Start agency, if such compensation, including non-Federal funds, exceeds an amount equal to the rate payable for level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code.” Please see <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2017/EX.pdf>.

The statute also defines the term “compensation” as:

“(A) includes salary, bonuses, periodic payments, severance pay, the value of any vacation time, the value of a compensatory or paid leave benefit not excluded by subparagraph (B), and the fair market value of any employee perquisite or benefit not excluded by subparagraph (B); and
(B) excludes any Head Start agency expenditure for a health, medical, life insurance, disability, retirement, or any other employee welfare or pension benefit.”

Additional information on the “Statutory Requirement regarding compensation of Head Start staff” is available in the Program Instruction: [ACF-PI-HS-16-03](#).

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the first year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

7. Budget and Budget Justification

Applicants must demonstrate that funds are budgeted to provide all required comprehensive Head Start and/or Early Head Start services. Evidence of a reasonable per child cost, based on the proposed program type and program option(s), to ensure the maximum number of eligible children are served, must be included. The application must clearly and accurately distinguish between the proposed Head Start and Early Head Start base operating funds, T/TA funds, total federal funds, and the applicant's non-federal share, if applicable. Additionally, applications should provide a cost-effective budget that is aligned with the program services, staffing plan, and other program components proposed in the application narrative.

The application must detail the plan to contribute the required non-federal share/match of the total project cost. Each source of non-federal share match must be clearly identified, including the estimated amount per source and the valuation methodology. Finally, the proposed sources of non-federal share/match must only be derived from allowable sources. Please see *Section III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching* for information on the matching requirement.

Start-up/Pre-Award Costs

The application must demonstrate that start-up/pre-award costs, if proposed, are justified, reasonable, and applicable based on the applicant's proposed Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. Applicants requesting start-up funding must submit a separate budget for start-up/pre-award costs as described in *Section II. Federal Award Information*. If the applicant is not requesting start-up/pre-award costs, this requirement is not applicable.

Start-up/pre-award costs may include: 1) ensuring that proposed facilities comply with state and local requirements and are adequately equipped, 2) purchasing classroom equipment and supplies, and/or 3) conducting staff background checks.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, and taxes.

Travel

Description: Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

Justification: For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year per unit and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the applicant organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for

selecting the delegate agency.

Construction

Description: Costs of construction by applicant or contractor.

Justification: Provide a detailed budget and narrative in accordance with the instructions for other object class categories. Identify which construction activities/costs will be contractual and those that the applicant will assume.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

1) The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

2) Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, “any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect costs rate, ... may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in § 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.”

Justification: This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent de minimis rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be

charged as direct costs to the grant.

Program Income

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under federally-funded projects, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and interest on loans made with award funds.

Justification: Describe the nature, source, and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

Commitment of Non-Federal Resources

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards). **A recipient's failure to provide a statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.I.* of this announcement.

Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

Electronic Delivery

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

Obtain a DUNS Number: All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizations DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

Register with SAM: In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). All organizations must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

Create a Grants.gov Account: The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

Authorize Grants.gov Roles: After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of your organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

Track Role Status: To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that

submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization as an AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each FOA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

The following is an overview of applying via Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or ACF forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

Complete SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

Submit a Workspace: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

Track a Workspace: After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The

number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

Applicants with slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

Issues with Federal Systems

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

To request an exemption from required electronic submission please refer to ACF's "Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" document for complete guidance at:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf_policy_for_requesting_an_exemption_from

[_required_electronic.pdf.](#)

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the "Help" tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;

- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **01/16/2019**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not

received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Emergency Extensions

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation

check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:

ACF will provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Intergovernmental_Review_SPOC_01_2018_OFFM.pdf.

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 330 C St. SW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20201.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no

action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

IV.6. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)

No more than 15 percent of total costs may be used for program administration. An HHS official may grant a waiver of the 15 percent limitation on allowable development and administration costs for a Head Start or Early Head Start program approving a higher percentage for a specific period of time not to exceed 12 months (45 CFR § 1303.5).

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Submission By Mail

Office of Head Start
OHS Operations Center
1401 Mercantile Lane
Suite 401
Largo, MD 20774

Hand Delivery

Office of Head Start
OHS Operations Center
1401 Mercantile Lane
Suite 401
Largo, MD 20774

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications

electronically via www.Grants.gov.
For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: With the exception of the funding opportunity announcement and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

In addition to the required elements of the project description found in *Section IV.2*, the objective review panel will evaluate proposals in accordance with the relevant sections of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (45 CFR Parts 1301-1305). The review of applications under this FOA will result in a numerical score as evaluated by a panel of non-federal reviewers. The review panel will assign numerical scores for each evaluation criterion based on a range of points (0 points - total point value), taking into consideration the extent to which the application narrative includes substantial and compelling evidence.

1. Demonstration of Need: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options	Maximum Points:20
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To evaluate the Demonstration of Need, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant presents evidence of the need for Head Start and/or Early Head Start services in the proposed community. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will deliberate the following narrative elements:

- How Head Start and/or Early Head Start resources will be directed to the geographic area(s) of greatest need.
- The rationale for which ages of children are proposed to be served, including the estimated number of eligible pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers by program type and geographic location(s).
- If the proposed program option(s) is the most appropriate to meet the needs of the

community.

- The analysis of access to other early childhood education programs in the geographic area.
- The plan to enroll children with disabilities.
- How the need for full-day, full-year services in the community will be met, including the planned number of hours per day, days per week, and weeks per year of program operations.
- If applicable, how the proposed delegate agency is identified, including the communities in which the applicant will operate, the number of children to be served by age of child and their proposed program option(s).
- Evidence of community engagement in the proposed geographic locations that is designed to improve service delivery, increase access to services, and prevent duplication.

2. Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children

Maximum Points:30

To evaluate Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant presents evidence of its ability to implement a high-quality, comprehensive program for the population the applicant proposes to serve in the *Demonstration of Need* section. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will deliberate the following narrative elements:

- The curriculum or set of curricula and teaching practices proposed that promote progress toward school readiness goals.
- The process for establishing and measuring school readiness goals. Do those school readiness goals reflect the ages of children that the applicant proposes to serve in the program, and are they culturally and linguistically appropriate?
- If the school readiness goals were or will be established in consultation with the parents of children who will be participating in the program.
- How the applicant will meet the needs of infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers with disabilities.
- The plan to meet the needs of the applicant's targeted population, including infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers in the child welfare system, dual language learners, homeless children, and pregnant women.
- How the applicant will meet the health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health needs of program participants.
- **For applicants proposing center-based or family child care services:** How the applicant describes a plan for observing teacher practice, including teacher-child interactions. **For applicants proposing home-based services:** How the applicant describes a plan for observing home visitor practice. Do all applicants describe using this information to inform professional development and practice improvements?
- The process for selecting the specified assessment tool. The plan to use child assessment data to individualize the instruction and learning for each child and, as necessary, refer for additional evaluation and intervention; and to aggregate and analyze child-level assessment data.

- The plan to coordinate with public and private entities to assist the program in providing child health and developmental services and program management services.
- **For applicants proposing an Early Head Start program:**
 - The system proposed to deliver services to enrolled pregnant women post-pregnancy, and how the newborn infant and family will transition into the appropriate program option at the appropriate time; and how the program will support transitions from Head Start to public and community-based school settings.
 - How the applicant will ensure that infants, toddlers, and their families participating in the program will have the opportunity to receive Head Start or other appropriate preschool services.
- The plan to facilitate the meaningful engagement of parents in activities designed to help them become full partners in the education of their children. Barriers to parent participation should be discussed.

3. Past Performance

Maximum Points:20

To evaluate Past Performance, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant provides evidence of its organizational history and experience in successfully providing high-quality early education or other related programs. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will assess whether the applicant's past performance:

- Supports its ability to effectively administer a project of the size, complexity, and scope of their proposed program.
- Describes the professional experience of its proposed management team, and whether that supports its ability to effectively administer a project of this size, complexity, and scope.
- Supports its ability to provide effective financial management in operating a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program.
- As applicable, includes any violations, such as deficiencies, areas of non-compliance, and/or audit findings, if the applicant is a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee. The narrative may describe actions taken to address the violations, and the extent to which these actions have addressed the violations.

NOTE: If the applicant does not have violations or is not a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee, this criterion is not applicable to the review of the application.

4. Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce

Maximum Points:20

To evaluate Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant demonstrates its ability to recruit, retain, and manage staff with the ability to implement a comprehensive Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will deliberate the following narrative elements:

- Evidence of the proposed program director and proposed key program staff's ability to meet the required qualifications to administer a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program, complex social service program, or early education services.

- The plan to attract and retain qualified staff with the ability to implement a high-quality program.
- If the applicant proposes to provide career development opportunities for professional, paraprofessional, and other staff.
- If the plan to evaluate job applicants, including existing grantee staff, to determine which applicants are most capable of implementing a high-quality, comprehensive program is realistic.

5. Planning and Implementation

Maximum Points:15

To evaluate Planning and Implementation, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant details its plan to provide effective and efficient implementation of Head Start and/or Early Head Start programming, including transition period planning to minimize the disruption of services. Applicants must include an implementation plan and timeline that addresses, at a minimum, the following:

- State and local licensing requirements for each proposed age group, the length of time required to obtain licensure for early childhood learning environments and the impact on the proposed implementation plan for the timely provision of services.
- The availability of appropriate facilities for proposed program models, and the anticipated timelines for completing any construction, renovation, or adaptation of space to meet requirements.
- As applicable, plans for alternative service provision (e.g., temporary home-based services) during start-up, until facilities are fully operational.
- Where facilities are not available, a plan to acquire facilities in accordance with federal Head Start regulations.
- The ability to recruit, hire and train qualified staff to support the proposed start of Head Start and/or Early Head Start programming.

6. Organizational Capacity and Governance

Maximum Points:25

To evaluate Organizational Capacity and Governance, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant demonstrates its understanding of the crucial role of the Board and Policy Council. Reviewers will also consider the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a capacity to provide effective program administration and oversight. In reaching their conclusion, reviewers will deliberate the following narrative elements:

- The capacity of the senior executive managers and governing board to:
 - exercise effective oversight of program operations and accountability for federal funds;
 - include the Policy Council in the planning and decision-making process;
 - ensure representation of the diverse community served;
 - set and monitor overall agency priorities and operational systems; and
 - conduct community assessment, annual self-assessments, and ongoing monitoring.
- The ability to plan, constitute and train a governing body in compliance with Head Start regulations. If applicable, an applicant can describe how its current governance

structure would change to meet the requirement of the Head Start Act.

- The existence of management systems for program planning, internal and external communication, recordkeeping, issuance of internal and external reports, and program self-assessment and monitoring.

7. Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:20

To evaluate Budget, reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that funds are budgeted to provide all required Head Start and/or Early Head Start services, and if the applicant:

- Clearly and accurately distinguishes the proposed Head Start and Early Head Start base operating funds, T/TA funds, total federal funds, and the applicant's non-federal share, if applicable.
- Provides a cost-effective budget that is aligned with all components of the application narrative as described in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification*.
- Includes evidence of a reasonable per child cost, based on the proposed program type and program option(s), to ensure the maximum number of eligible children are served.
- Demonstrates that start-up/pre-award costs, if proposed, are justified, reasonable, and applicable based on the applicant's proposed Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. **NOTE:** If the applicant is not requesting start-up/pre-award costs, this criterion is not applicable.
- Details its plan to contribute the required non-federal share/match of the total project cost.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement.

Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

Federal Financial Review

The financial review assesses the grantee's financial capability based on information provided in the application package, including the most recent audit conducted under 45 CFR Part 75 – Subpart F. Applicants will be ranked as either a **low-to-no risk** (qualifies as a low risk auditee) or **high risk** (does not qualify as a low risk auditee). Please note that applicant entities that have never been audited or have not submitted an audit for the most recently completed fiscal year as required under 45 CFR §75.512(b)(1) no later than nine months following the end of the fiscal year will be classified as **high risk**.

This review will not change the numerical scores determined in *Section V.1 Criteria*, by the objective review panel, but the financial review will assist ACF in determining whether an otherwise qualified applicant has sufficient financial capacity to manage the potential award.

Pre-Award Discussions and Negotiations

ACF may enter into pre-award discussions and/or negotiations with one or more applicants regarding each applicant's proposed project, budget, and other information related to its organizational capacity to provide high-quality, comprehensive early education services before making final award(s). Based on these discussions, ACF may consider:

- Whether the proposal meets the stated purpose of the funding opportunity as described in the *Executive Summary* and/or *Section I. Program Description*.
- Whether the proposed program is cost effective based on the application submitted for evaluation in response to *Section IV.2. The Project Description and Budget and Budget Justification*.
- Whether the proposal contains contingent activities that may impede, or indefinitely delay, the implementation of the proposed program such as, but not limited to, the ability to timely renovate and/or secure facilities that are required to deliver Head Start and/or Early Head Start services.
- Any other factors necessary for ACF to determine if the applicant is capable of providing high-quality, comprehensive early education services.

Not all pre-award discussions and/or negotiations will result in grant awards. ACF

reserves the right to cease discussions and negotiations with applicants prior to award and may enter into discussions or negotiations with other applicants.

Additional Review and Funding Considerations

The Head Start Act gives priority to organizations based on their ability to serve target populations. In keeping with Section 641(d)(3) of the Head Start Act, HHS shall give priority to applicants for Head Start funding that have demonstrated capacity in providing effective, comprehensive, and well-coordinated early childhood education and development services and programs to children and their families. Section 645A(e) of the Head Start Act gives priority in Early Head Start funding to entities with a record of providing early, continuous, and comprehensive childhood development and family services.

Please note that if the applicant is a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider the grantee's last two OHS monitoring reports. In addition, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider any monitoring reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of this FOA. ACF will retrieve, review, and consider any documentation that relates to the fiscal health and financial viability of the applicant. ACF will also retrieve, review, and consider state licensing documentation on the applicant. These reports and documents may be considered in making final funding determinations.

Also, if the applicant is a current Head Start, EHS, or EHS-CC Partnership grantee, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider the grantee's enrollment data for the 3 years preceding the posting of this FOA. Ongoing under-enrollment may be considered in making final funding determinations.

ACF reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant that is presently designated as "high risk," probationary or not in good standing, or has been debarred or defunded by any federal agency. ACF reserves the right not to fund applicants with unacceptably high federal Head Start per-child costs. Additionally, ACF may decide not to fund projects that would require unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment or that propose such a low number of children that the project may require unreasonably high operating costs relative to the number of children and families proposed to be served.

Applications proposing a Head Start program that are not from entities "in the community" to be served do not meet the requirements for designation as a Head Start agency in Section 641 of the Head Start Act. ACF will consider all "qualified applicants in such community" as required by Section 641(d) where the application demonstrates that the applicant has an organizational base within the community to be served. This could be established by virtue of the applicant being a provider of services in the community or having a clear relationship to the community as evidenced, for example, by board representation from the community or by evidence of the support of community leaders, including, but not limited to, mayors, city council members, school principals, presidents of local chambers of commerce, county government officials, social service provider organizations, community organizations representing low-income, minority, or other relevant sectors of the community, including child care providers and organizations.

ACF is interested in ensuring a robust competition for high-quality, comprehensive early care and education service providers. Accordingly ACF reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant for whom there is evidence of statements, written agreements, correspondence, etc.

that prohibit other entities from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on their own behalf or that impose a penalty on any entity for making such application.

Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

As required by 2 CFR Part 200, the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), www.fapiis.gov/, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval in the objective review process, but were not selected for award, may receive funding if additional funds become available or may compete for funding during the next review cycle (if one occurs in the next fiscal year). Applications designated as “approved but unfunded” typically cannot be kept in an active status for more than 12 months. For those applications determined as “approved but unfunded,” notice will be given of the determination by email.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

VI.1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other

correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

Grantees may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the grantee's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the grantee must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at <http://www.ecfr.gov>. Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

The Head Start specific regulations (known as the Program Performance Standards) are:

- 45 CFR Part 1301, Program Governance
- 45 CFR Part 1302, Program Operations
- 45 CFR Part 1303, Financial and Administrative Requirements
- 45 CFR Part 1304, Federal Administrative Procedures
- 45 CFR Part 1305, Definitions
- And all applicable grant regulations

Copies of the current applicable Head Start regulations are available at the websites identified in *Section VIII. Other Information, Reference Websites*. Regulations used to determine whether expenditures by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are allowable can be found at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy> under Fiscal Regulations.

VI.3. Reporting

Performance Progress Annually
Reports:

Unless otherwise noted in this section, recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2>.

Head Start Program Reporting

All Head Start grantees will be required to submit program information periodically, including for example, monthly enrollment reports, an annual Program Information Report (PIR), and service location and staff contact information. Grantees will be notified in advance of required reporting through various means, such as Notice of Award (NoA) documents, email correspondence, and letters. Additional information on Head Start Program Reporting can be found at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/data/pir>. The PIR serves as the annual performance progress report for the Office of Head Start.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Program Office Contact

Shawna Pinckney
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Head Start
330 C Street, SW.
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (888) 242-0684
Email: OHSTech@reviewops.org

Office of Grants Management Contact

Jeff Newton
Administration for Children and Families
1961 Stout Street
Office 08-148
Denver, CO 80294
Phone: (303) 844-1149

Email: jeff.newton@acf.hhs.gov

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) www.hhs.gov/.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) www.acf.hhs.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecast www.grants.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunity Announcements ami.grantsolutions.gov/.

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.

Grants.gov Accessibility Information [www.grants.gov/ web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

Head Start Information on the Internet

The Head Start Act as amended by The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, (Pub. L. 110-134) <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/law>.

Head Start Program Performance Standards (45 CFR Parts 1301-1305) http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_07/45cfrv4_07.html#1301.

Applicant Support Resources

OHS strongly encourages applicants interested in applying for this Head Start and Early Head Start opportunity to visit <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-4>. This webpage provides information on applying for grants, registering and applying through www.Grants.gov, submitting an application, and understanding the grant review process. Additionally, interested entities can find important information on state-specific Head Start and/or Early Head Start funding, deciding whether to apply, and frequently asked questions at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/grant-application/article/decide-whether-apply>.

Lastly, OHS encourages entities interested applicants to visit <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/grant-application/article/funding-opportunity-announcement-foa-locator-map>. This website offers

resources, such as a **profile of the current grantee services, equipment, and inventory**, that are intended to support organizations in preparing their funding applications. All interested applicants are reminded to frequently refer back to this FOA when preparing their application.

Prospective applicants will also have the opportunity to send questions to OHS by e-mail at OHS Tech@reviewops.org. A summary of the questions and OHS responses will be posted for public view on the applicant support website as soon as they become available.

Interested applicants may also contact the OHS Operations Center at (888) 242-0684 or TTY: 711 if they have additional questions.

Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> .	If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> .	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C. Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs / SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424C - Budget Information Construction Programs / SF-424D - Assurances Construction Programs	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>These forms are available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.</p> <p>All forms are required for applications under this FOA for projects that include both non-construction and construction activities.</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov.</p>	<p>A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>
SF-424 Key Contact Form	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov.</p>	Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

	www.Grants.gov .	
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	<p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov.</p>	<p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application.</p> <p>If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov.</p>	Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.
Project Summary/Abstract	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>.</p> <p>The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.</p>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Federal Financial Review Attachments	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .
Certificate of Good Standing	See <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> and <i>The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity</i> .	Submission is required with the application by the Application Due Date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity</i> .	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the application due date and time listed in the <i>Overview</i> and

		<p><i>Section IV.4.</i> of the FOA.</p> <p>If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
Proof of Policy Council Approval	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> and <i>The Project Description, Additional Eligibility Documentation</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Application Due Dates and Times</i> .
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDR)	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i>.</p> <p>The IDR must be submitted with the application package.</p>	<p>If the IDR is available by the application due date, it must be submitted with the application package.</p> <p>If it is not available by the application due date, listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
Assurance: Board Attestation	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> and <i>Section V.1. Criteria</i> , with a template provided in the <i>Appendix</i> .	Applicants for whom this applies the assurance must be signed by the Board chair, who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant. Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Appendix

Assurance Template: Board of Directors Attestation

For applicants to whom this applies, this assurance must be completed, **signed** and dated, and submitted as part of this application in the appendices.

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

I, (name), attest that (organization) collaborated with an external grant-writer(s), consultant(s), and/or contractor(s) on the development of the application submitted in response to the funding opportunity announcement. Further I, (name), attest that the governing Board of (organization)

actively participated in the content development and commitments included in the applicant's proposal. On behalf of (Organization) I also confirm that its governing Board, and proposed Head Start and/or Early Head Start management staff are fully knowledgeable of the Head Start regulatory requirements.

(Signature)

(First and Last Name)

(Title/Board Chair)

The assurance must be signed by the Board Chair, who is the designated representative of the applicant with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants.